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Country cooperation frameworks and related matters

Extension of the first country cooperation framework for Costa Rica

Note by the Administrator

Period of extension:
January 2001 to 31 December 2001

I. Background and justification

1. The first country cooperation framework (CCF) for Costa Rica was approved by the Executive Board in July 1998 for the period 1998 to 2000. Prepared in collaboration with a recently elected Government, the CCF sets out the following priorities for UNDP cooperation: (a) analysis, design and implementation of public policies; (b) strengthening of local capacities; and (c) environment. In early 2000, after the first two years of the mandate, the Government redefined its priorities for action, shifting emphasis towards the social sector, with particular efforts on poverty alleviation. The UNDP programme has been realigned to give better support to national development objectives; actions are now concentrating on poverty alleviation, governance and environment.

2. The Government of Costa Rica has requested a one-year extension to ensure full UNDP support to its priority programmes and to align the programme with the mandate of the Government, which ends in May 2002.

II. Objectives

3. UNDP support to national development objectives concentrates on three priority areas: (a) poverty alleviation; (b) governance; and (c) environment. The President launched two priority programmes in the social sector, for which UNDP support has been sought: (a) a programme to provide breakfast to children between the ages 0 and 5 in the poorest areas of the country; and (b) a programme to improve

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equity in education. Other priority programmes are in the process of formulation, all of them related to the introduction of efficiency and to ensure that the social-sector budget has a visible impact. Expected results of these projects include improved living conditions of the poor, and increased coverage and effectiveness of the social programmes involved. In the medium and long term, the Government intends to formulate a national strategy for poverty reduction.

4. With regard to governance, one objective of UNDP support is to strengthen the Solidarity Triangle, a priority programme that articulates central government institutions, local governments, and civil society in the identification and solution of the most urgent needs of the communities. Another objective is to reinforce the national human development report, which is already widely recognized as a solid contribution for the analysis of the country's development challenges and for the formulation of public policies.

5. In the area of environmental sustainability, UNDP support focuses on the formulation of an environmental strategy and a programmatic framework for Global Environment Facility resources to ensure the coherence and impact of its conservation efforts.

6. The redefinition of UNDP support to the most important national development objectives is paving the way for the formulation, in 2002, of a new country cooperation framework for the period beginning January 2000 that reflects a more focused and relevant UNDP in Costa Rica. Harmonization of programme periods is foreseen for the year 2002, once the common country assessment and United Nations Development Assistance Framework are finalized.

7. The Administrator wishes to inform the Executive Board that he has approved the one-year extension of the first country cooperation framework for Costa Rica for a period of one year, from 1 January to 31 December 2001.